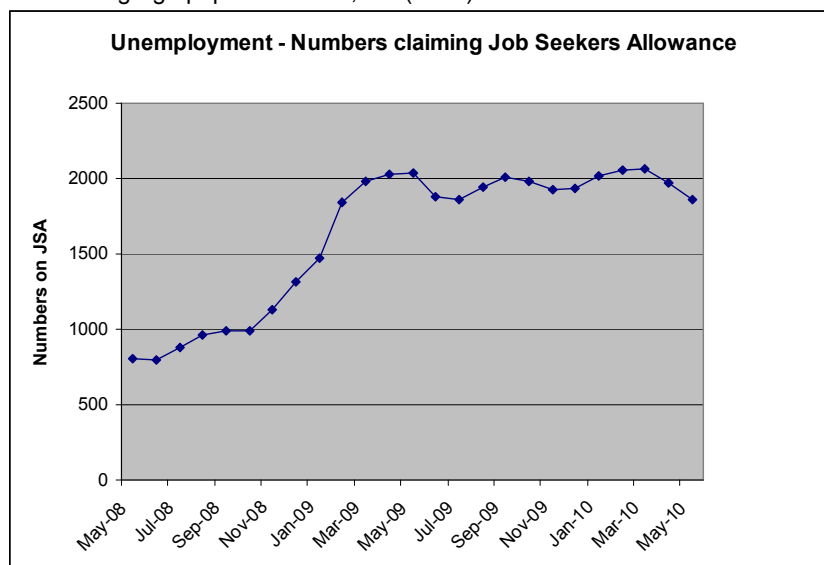


Ashford Borough local economic monitor- May 2010

Numbers claiming Job-Seekers allowance (JSA)

NB Working-age population = 67,100 (2007)



JSA has fallen dramatically in the last month, mirroring the national trend. It now stands at 2.8% of the working population, as opposed to 3.8% nationally, and 2.8% in the south-east.

The Business Environment – Chamber of Commerce

Anecdotal evidence shows that business is still very tough, companies are being asked to quote for more work, but the orders are not yet being placed. The construction and manufacturing industries are still the key areas being affected.

Town Centre Vacancy Rates

Survey Date	July 2009	Oct 2009	Feb 2010	May 2010
Number of Units Vacant	38	35	43	41
% of units vacant	12%	11%	13%	13%

Town Centre vacancy rates are calculated from a sample size of 319 properties.

Housing Startup and Completion rates (source = internal Building Control info)

Housing Startup and Completion rates slowed at the end of 2009, reflecting the annual downward trend around the Christmas period –

Month	Startups	Completions
Jan-10	42	6
Feb-10	39	17
Mar-10	126	35
Apr-10	106	25

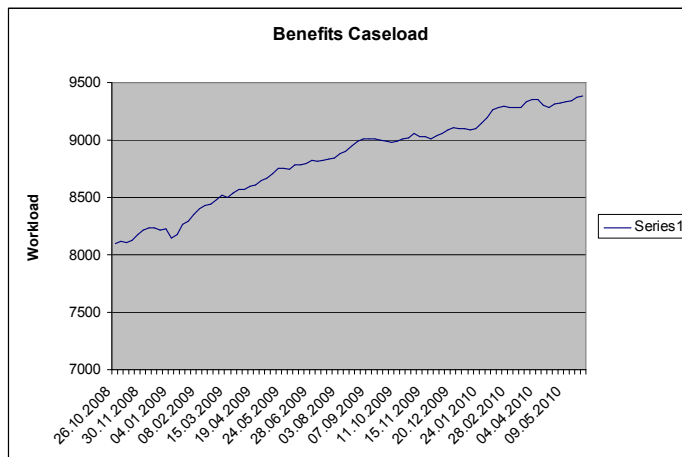
The Housing Market

House Prices (source = home.co.uk)

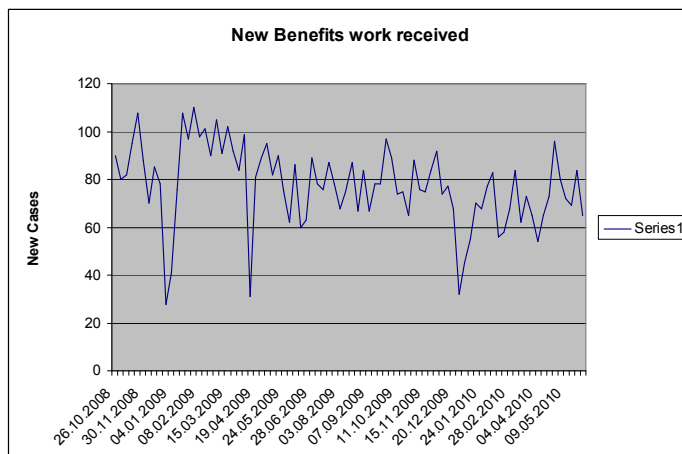
Average asking prices have rallied somewhat since February this year, apart from a continued fall in flats, perhaps continued evidence of the first time buyer slump -

Type of House	Mar 2010	Apr 2010	May 2010	May 2009	Change from Apr 2010	Change from May 2009
Detached	£291,321	£291,828	£312,868	£300,159	+7%	+4%
Semi	£199,980	£170,558	£196,551	£174,447	+15%	+13%
Terraced	£167,922	£151,906	£161,441	£163,380	+6%	-1%
Flat	£117,026	£117,629	£114,175	£107,188	-9%	-6%
All	£211,647	£197,052	£205,238	£205,699	+4%	+0%

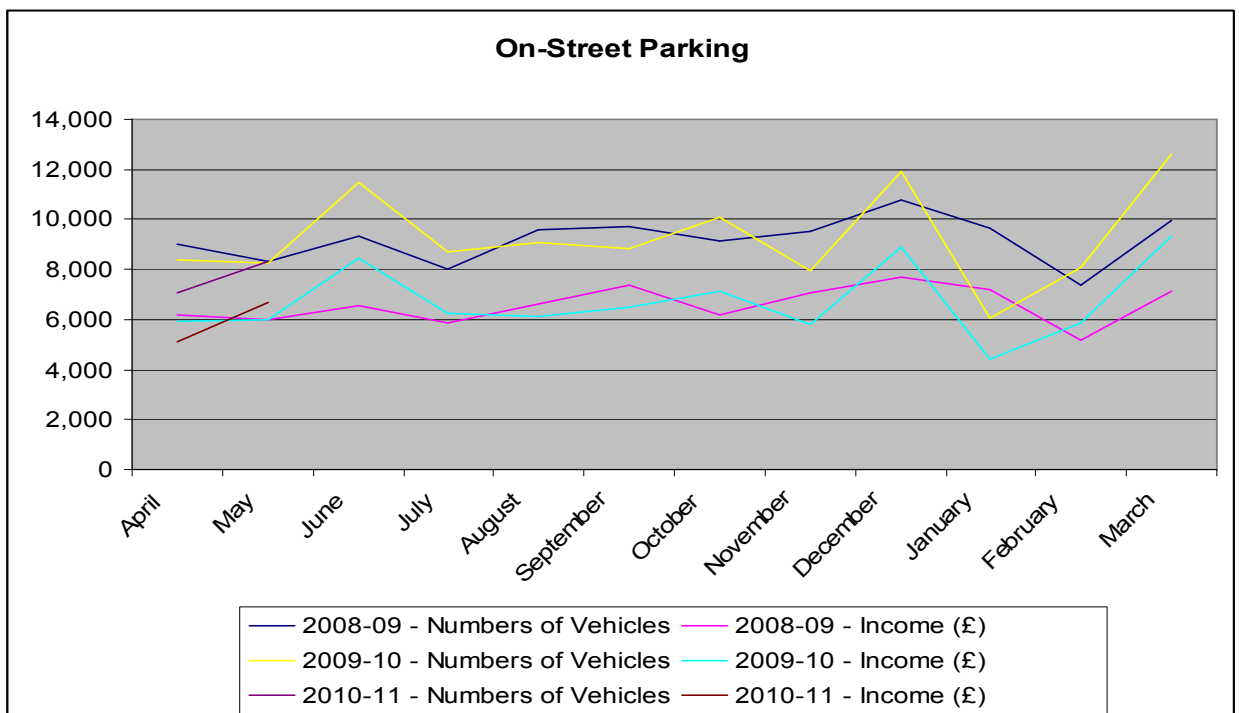
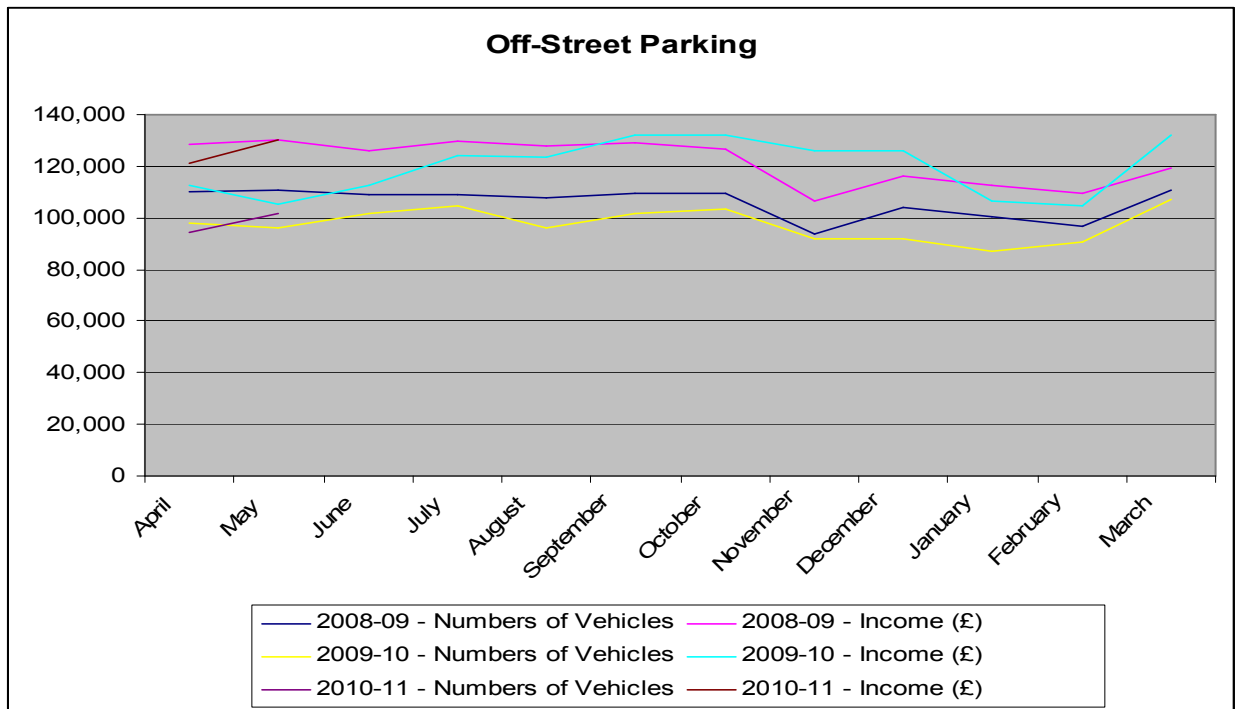
Benefits Pressure levels- Changes in Benefits Caseload



The steady increase in the benefits caseload is predominantly down to the increase in unemployed and financially insecure members of the Ashford working population, and the Revs and Bens team has brought in extra resource with which to deal with the rising caseload.



Car Park Usage



Planning and Development

Time period	Land Charge Searches - Personal	Planning Apps - Major	Planning Apps - Minor	Planning Apps - Other
Jan 10	157	4	28	53
Feb 10	172	9	39	102
Mar 10	206	7	46	140
Apr 10	176	9	38	93